

Special Training and Promotion Agreements¹

This section furnishes information and instructions pertaining to those training programs and/or special promotion provisions that require prior approval by the Commission. Approval of the Commission is required when an agency wishes:

1. To provide for the acceptance of experience or training, in noncompetitive actions, other than that specified in the usual competitive requirements;
2. To make use of special training programs as a basis for promotions under section 2.502 (g) of the Commission's regulations.

TRAINING AGREEMENTS

Whenever it is found that it would be advantageous to the Federal service for certain employees to be prepared for advancement to higher grade positions within a shorter period of time than is normally possible, the Commission may enter into special training agreements with agencies to accomplish that end. Such agreements may provide for the acceptance of certain *special in-service training* as a means of supplementing the trainee's present qualifications in such a way as to provide the full equivalent of whatever experience and training is ordinarily required for promotion to the position sought. They may also provide for the acceptance of such training as a means of developing and materially improving the trainee's qualifications in order to increase his usefulness in the agency even though a shortening of the length of the usual experience requirement is not involved.

Limitations.—A training agreement may be the basis for promotions in accordance with the terms of section 2.502 (g) of the Commission's regulations.

¹ See also A6-3 for Executive Development Agreements and V2-1 for Job Training Programs for Veterans.

An employee may be promoted a maximum of two grades (or equivalent) in one year solely as a result of training agreements. However, in case the employee has prior service which can be counted in determining his eligibility for further promotion, promotions of more than two grades in one year might result. In another case the employee may have recently been promoted under another subsection of section 2.502 and that promotion plus promotions under training agreements may result in promotions of more than two grades in a one-year period. The restriction in section 2.502 (a), of a three-month waiting period after the employee's latest nontemporary competitive appointment, applies to promotions under training agreements.

CRITERIA FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS

To be acceptable by the Commission, a proposed training program must meet the following criteria:

- (1) There must be a bona fide objective for the training. It must serve the administrative interests of the agency. Training programs devised for the purpose of exempting individual employees from the general promotion restrictions will not be approved.
- (2) The program must provide for well planned, soundly organized training.
- (3) The training must be intensive, and such as will materially improve the trainees' qualifications.
- (4) If the training provides for a shortening of the usual length-of-experience requirement, the intensive training must be such that it will provide the employee, within the shortened period, with substantially the same abilities to perform the duties of the higher grade position as he would

normally acquire within the usual length of experience.

Requests for training agreements.—The following detailed information should be included in the agency's request for an agreement:

(1) Reason for training program. Include sufficient information to point up the objective of the program and to show how the training will serve the administrative interests of the agency.

(2) Coverage. Give the grades and classes of employees who are to be trained and the grades and classes for which they are being trained.

(3) Method of selecting trainees. Show the standards proposed for selecting trainees. Even though agency employees are selected for training without any actual position change, the method of selection should be such as will select candidates that have appropriate aptitudes, abilities, and interest to profit materially from the training.

(4) Length of training period before promotion, or if more than one promotion is involved, the length of the period before each promotion. Except in the most unusual circumstances, the training plan should not provide for promotions up to GS-5 during the first 3 months of training, and promotion to GS-6 or higher positions within the first 6 months of training.

(5) An outline of the training program as a whole, listing topics or subjects to be covered and number of days or weeks devoted to each. Sufficient detailed information must be given that the Commission can determine whether the program meets the required standards.

(6) Official responsible for the program.

(7) Qualifications of instructors, including their ability to train.

(8) Description of instructional materials to be used, such as manuals, textbooks, guides.

(9) Instructional plan or method of the course, such as on-the-job instruction, lecture,

directed reading, conferences, or other, and whether the training is by individual or group instruction.

(10) Facilities and equipment to be used in training.

(11) Plans for determining when trainees have reached satisfactory work standards. Very definite means of determining whether an individual employee is prepared to perform the duties of the higher grade position must be established. In some cases a demonstration of a certain speed and quality of performance may be used; in other cases, a test of information acquired may be appropriate. In no case will the Commission approve a training agreement which contains a perfunctory method of determining whether the employee has sufficiently profited by the training to be promoted.

Requests for agreements should be submitted in triplicate. They should be addressed to the office of the Commission (the Examining Division, Bureau of Departmental Operations, in the central office or the appropriate regional office) which has examining jurisdiction over the position for which training will be given.

★**Record of completion of training course.**—A record of satisfactory completion of training under a Commission-approved training program shall be made a part of each employee's Official Personnel Folder.★

PROMOTION AGREEMENTS

A promotion agreement is an agreement authorizing agencies to assign or promote employees of certain grades and classes to certain other grades or classes under noncompetitive requirements that may differ in some respects from the usual competitive qualifications requirements, for example, by substitution of education, experience, or training for all or part of the usual qualifications requirements. It is

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distinguished from a training agreement in that no significant special training, over and above that involved in the regular duties of the position, is required. Even though promotion agreements are approved with respect to the qualification requirements for noncompetitive actions, reassignments and promotions permitted under the terms of such agreements are nevertheless subject to the limitations of section 2.502 of the Commission's regulations. A promotion agreement cannot be used as a basis for promotions under section 2.502 (g).

Requests for promotion agreements should be addressed to the same office of the Commission as is indicated for "Training Agreements" on page A6-6 and should include the following:

1. Reason for promotion agreement.
2. Positions involved.
3. Proposed requirements.

4. If the proposed standards involve substitution of training, ordinarily the same information as requested under "Requests for Training Agreements," items 4 through 11, page A6-6, should be submitted; if the "training" has been acquired in the past, as much of that information as is pertinent and available should be submitted.

EXTENT OF COMMISSION'S APPROVAL

★ Approval of a training agreement by the Commission extends only to approval of requirements and standards for selection and promotion. Approval of an agreement does not constitute either a direct or implied agreement that the proposed training meets the requirements of the Government Employees Training Act, Executive Order 10800, the Commission's Training Regulations (Part 39), appropriation acts, or other statutes or policies that may be applicable to training. ★